

From: Gregg Givens
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/6/01 3:09pm
Subject: User response to the Microsoft Antitrust settlement

my in the long run. We'll end up stronger for it. Ask the europeans, japanese, and chinese why they are favoring Linux over MS windows.

--

Gregg Givens ---- Systems Analyst
Hollins University Computer Services
ggivens@hollins.edu
cases of using a strongly positioned Application helping Microsoft to compete unfairly in the Operating System arena. I would be willing to bet money that if we split up MS into two companies, there would be a Linux version of MS Office Suite within 6 months or less. It would be in the INTERESTS of the MS Applications division to do so. IT is NOT in the interests of the OS division --- hence the problem.

My contention is that splitting the MS corporation will actually be GOOD FOR THE AMERICAN ECONOMY, contrary to Microsoft's scare tactics. Microsoft seems to make oblique remarks implying that what is good for Microsoft is good for the American economy, and that impeding Microsoft's advance would damage the economy. In fact the exact opposite is true.

Even though more efficient Operating systems such as Linux require less powerful hardware and might be less encouraging of the INTELS, AMDs, and other hardware vendors, the savings for EVERY OTHER COMPANY in America not having to buy new computers every 2 years might help the other 90% of the American companies to make a profit. How much American Corporate profit goes into the land fill every year when they have to scrap their old computers. With more fair competition, maybe more Applications program designers will be encouraged to write more applications --- even ones that compete directly with Microsoft's Application division. More competition in Applications and Operating systems might even make superior and MORE RELIABLE AND SECURE computer software, at a reasonable price. (I for one would look forward to days when the servers quit crashing periodically due to undocumented bugs in microsoft's OS. we have Linux and digital unix servers that have not had to be rebooted for most of a YEAR. We must boot our microsoft servers several times a month. I never even leave my MS windows 2000 desktop machine up for more than a day. I rarely if ever reboot my Linux desktop machine. Why do I keep Microsoft machines you ask ? Because our corporate execs DEMAND that we use Microsoft on the desktop. Not enough NON-MS OS applications available that the users are trained to use.)

You may not realize that there are many people who are dismayed by the incredibly weak response of the current administration to blatantly monopolistic practices by the Microsoft Corporation. Given the more vigorous legal efforts of the previous presidential administration, I don't feel it is completely out of line to question whether monetary influence during the presidential campaign could have something to do with the recent decision to abandon a bargaining

position of strength against the Microsoft corporation in favor of a settlement that is actually weaker than that being presented by Microsoft ITSELF prior to the judicial finding of monopoly. At the very least, the current regime in the department of Justice has some explaining to do against the APPEARANCE of impropriety.

Excluding that issue, we have the result in the marketplace itself. In the past, Microsoft has demonstrated a history of making every effort to avoid any previous remedies that the court has attempted. Either they have ignored the remedy completely or they have complied in the most minimal and unsatisfactory way to adhere to the letter of the law and avoid the spirit. Since the initial attempts to curb their behavior, Microsoft has only succeeded in gaining more unfair leverage and destroying more of their competitors. Don't be fooled that this was only the activity of the market. I have already outlined many ways that MS uses its Desktop OS monopoly to boost market share of its applications. Now that its Office Suite of Applications is stronger (due to the unfair leverage of its OS), it can use the Applications to help the OS maintain its position of dominance in the desktop.

If the USDOJ expects that further litigation will not be fruitful in curbing MS's monopolistic practices that HURT the consumer AND THE ECONOMY, then perhaps other government agencies can attempt another avenue for the remedy. I have heard that the Federal Trade Commission may have jurisdiction and enforcement powers that could be brought into play. Does the BUSH2 administration have the guts and desire to seek real enforcement of powerful remedies for the monopoly finding of the courts? Are they too timid and fooled by Microsoft's scare tactics to attempt such a thing? At this time, NOTHING could hurt the economy worse than it is already. You might drive a few stocks like Microsoft and Intel down for a short while if a strong remedy is attempted, but the long term benefits of increased competition and more efficient use of hardware resources (caused by better written Operating Systems such as Linux) could only help the US econo

CC: ggivens@hollins.edu@inetgw